



Thurston County Public Health and Social Services School Health and Safety Program

“Establishing Relationships and Expanding on Partnerships”

I. Program Core Focus

- Survey school facilities for compliance with existing school health and safety standards
- Identify health and safety risks
- Report findings to school officials and make compliance recommendations (priorities based on risk to students and staff)

II. History

- Program began in 1960's
- Started working with the program in 1983
- Wide range of program activities
- Full Facility Survey inspection with emphasis on critical issues
 - Lab Safety
 - Art Hazards
 - Shop Safety
 - Playground Safety
 - Asbestos
 - Mold
 - Indoor Air

III. Current Activities / Type of Activities

- ❖ Facility survey and kitchen inspections
 - Plan review (new construction and remodels)
 - Complaint investigation
 - Illness investigation
 - Issue consultation and resource referral
 - Indoor Air
 - Mold
 - Hazardous waste chemical identification (removal/recycle)
 - Food Manager Certification training
 - Water supply operation and maintenance
 - Waste water disposal system operation and maintenance
 - Indoor air concerns (chemical sensitivity, mold, and odors)

- ❖ New School Site Selection
 - On-Site sewage system suitability
 - Water availability
 - Noise impacts
 - Other concerns, such as past land use activities, power lines, flooding, and adjacent land uses (e.g. airport, oil storage yard)
- ❖ Special Emphasis Activities- Training, Facilitation, and Participation
 - Tools for Schools
 - Rehab the Lab
 - Indoor air / mold assessment
 - Playground safety inspector certification
 - Lab safety training
- ❖ Newsletter
 - Emerging issues
 - Current requirements
 - Training opportunities
- ❖ Technical Assistance/Resource Referral
 - Washington State Department of Health
 - Labor and Industries
 - Department of Ecology
 - Private companies
 - Other school district staff
 - Other health department staff
 - Educational Service District (ESD) staff

IV. Frequency of Surveys

- Annual facility survey
- Biannual kitchen inspection

V. Program Staffing and Number of Schools Served

- Staffing:

Field Staff	1.10 FTE
Admin Staff	.40 FTE
Total	1.50 FTE
- Total number of schools, including public and private: **98**
- Total number of Thurston County Students in both Public and Private Schools K-12:

38,781	(Public Schools)
1,717	(Private Schools)
40,498	Totals

VI. Funding Source

- Local fee schedule (\$140-\$660)
 - Surveys
 - Complaint investigations
 - Newsletters
 - Technical assistance/Resource referral
 - Equipment purchase, maintenance and calibration
 - Program Management
 - Staff Training
- Grants
 - Tools for Schools
 - Rehab the Lab

VII. Relationships - Challenges and Successes

❖ Challenges

- Establishing and maintaining communication
- Building trust and maintaining relationships
- Maintaining technical competency/Adapting to emerging issues
 - HVAC/ Ventilation operation
 - Playground safety inspection certification
 - Indoor air/mold hazard consultation
 - Water recreation facility certification (Certified Pool Operator)
 - Plan review/print reading skills
- Key school staff and local health department turnover
 - Superintendents, maintenance supervisors, and custodians
 - Local health department school health and safety staff
- Local Health Department budget limitations
 - Staffing
 - Training
 - Equipment
- School budget limitations
 - Bond failure
 - Private school funding limitations
 - Volunteer projects

❖ Successes

- Established good working relationships and lines of communication with key school district staff -“A phone call away”
- Built trust to help solve problems
 - Look for resources, answer questions, provide solutions, and ease concerns
- Met plan review, approval, and pre-opening inspection schedules
 - Funding deadline
 - School occupancy schedules

- Identified and corrected improperly operating ventilation systems
 - HVAC System vents improperly installed
 - Exhaust fans not working
 - Exhaust too close to intakes
 - Identified contractor installation error
 - Plumbing improperly installed causing mold under building
 - Implemented operation and maintenance requirements for school on-site sewage systems with food services
 - Coordinated with Washington State Department of Health Drinking water program for schools
 - Water systems operation/maintenance issues
 - Unsatisfactory water samples
 - Well site surveys
 - Promoted Rehab The Lab and lab safety training activities
 - Hazardous chemical removal/recycle
 - Substitution of less hazardous chemicals
 - Using smaller quantities (Microlab concept)
 - Identified and addressed art room ventilation concerns
 - Kilns vented to outside of building
 - Mechanical ventilation for silk screens and spray paints
 - Removed lead base paints (art instruction)
 - Identified volatile organic compounds (VOC's) and off gassing effects
 - Glues in carpets and carpet backing
 - Building materials, solvents, and paints
 - Identified asthma triggers in school environments
 - Mold
 - Pet dander
 - Chemicals
 - Identified school food safety risks using Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) Applications
 - Central kitchen preparation and transportation issues
 - Coordinated and assisted in mercury removal activities in schools
- ❖ Relationships -Keys to Success
- School staff
 - Superintendents, principals, teachers, maintenance supervisors, and custodians
 - Address issues as they are identified
 - Look for resources, provide solutions, and respond to concerns
 - Knowledgeable, dedicated maintenance supervisors and staff
 - Stay informed, attend trainings, provide solutions, and respond to concerns
 - Know their facilities and building systems well

VIII. Outlook for the Future

- School Health and Safety Issues
 - Clearly identified
 - Appropriate standards adopted and monitored for compliance
- Funding Resources are identified and allocated
 - Staffing, training, and equipment
- **“Everyone Participates in School Health and Safety”**
 - Superintendents, principles, teachers, and maintenance staff
 - Parents and students
 - Architects and building contractors
 - Risk managers
 - Education service district (ESD) staff
 - State and local health department staff